

2001-014-736

June 29, 2001

General Services Administration  
FAR Secretariat (MVR)  
Attn: Laurie Duarte  
1800 F Street, NW, Room 4035  
Washington, DC 20405

Re: FAR Case 2001-014

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the National Women's Law Center, we are writing to express our opposition to the Federal Acquisition Regulatory (FAR) Council's proposal to repeal the rules on federal contractor responsibility that went into effect on January 19, 2001.

These contractor responsibility rules make it clear that a company's record of compliance with the law, including laws that prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of gender, race, national origin, religion, age, and disability, is relevant to deciding whether the company should be eligible to receive a government contract. They ensure that the federal government will award taxpayer-funded contracts to ethical, law-abiding companies, not companies that seriously or repeatedly violate the law. If these rules are repealed, the government risks undermining its own laws and the fundamental principles that underlie them by rewarding lawbreakers and potentially subsidizing their illegal activities through contract awards.


Basic principles of fairness demand that companies discriminating against women or minorities or routinely violating environmental or health and safety laws not be awarded lucrative, taxpayer-funded contracts. The contractor responsibility rules send a clear message to prospective contractors about the importance of complying with civil rights, environmental, consumer, and worker protection laws.


Because the contractor responsibility rules protect and advance these important principles, they are of tremendous value to the civil rights community. Accordingly, we urge the FAR Council not to repeal the rules and to let the rules go into effect without further delay.

714-1736

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

  
Judith C. Appelbaum  
Vice President and Director of  
Employment Opportunities

  
Nicole Deddens  
Counsel